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This newsletter is provided by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management for child care facilities participating in the 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program. This newsletter provides updates on environmental issues affecting children. Please feel free to use these articles in your own newsletters. We encourage you to post this in areas where parents will have access to it.

If you have any questions or comments about the information included here, please contact Karen Teliha at 800-988-7901.

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Children Act Fast... So Do Poisons!

That's the theme for is National Poison Prevention Week 2001 which runs March 18-24. Follow this checklist to learn how to correct situations that may lead to poisonings. If you answer "No" to any questions, fix the situation quickly. Your goal is to have all your answers "Yes."

1. Yes No
Do all harmful products in the cabinets have child-resistant caps? Products like furniture polishes, drain cleaners and some oven cleaners should have safety packaging to keep little children from accidentally opening the packages.

2. Yes No
Are all potentially harmful products in their original containers? There are two dangers if products aren't stored in their original containers. Labels on the original containers often give first aid information if someone should swallow the product. And if products are stored in containers like drinking glasses or pop bottles, someone may think it is food and swallow it.

3. Yes No

Are harmful products stored away from food? If harmful products are placed next to food, someone may accidentally get a food and a poison mixed up and swallow the poison.

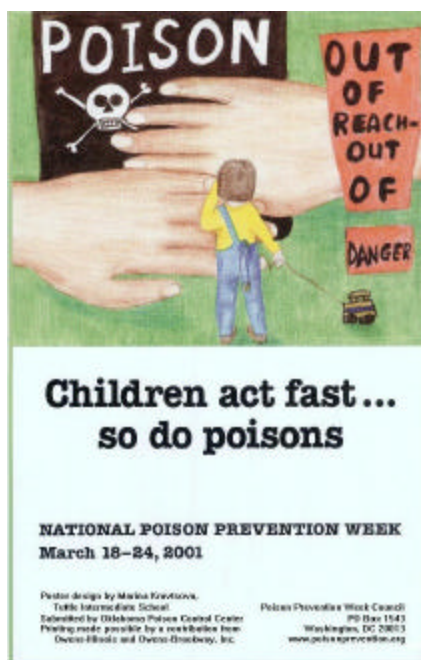
4. Yes No

Have all potentially harmful products been put up high and out of reach of children? The best way to prevent

poisoning is making sure that it's impossible to find and get at the poisons. Locking all cabinets that hold dangerous products is the best poison prevention.

5. Yes No
Do your aspirins and other potentially harmful products have child-resistant closures? Aspirins and most prescription drugs come with child-resistant caps.

Check to see yours have them, and that they are properly secured. Check your prescriptions before leaving the pharmacy to make sure the medicines are in child-resistant packaging. These caps have been shown to save the lives of children.



Get the Word Out...to Get the Lead Out!

Now available--a free lead poisoning prevention packet of materials designed to be used by day care centers to educate parents! The good news is that lead poisoning is preventable, but only if parents, teachers and child care providers are aware of the hazards of lead.

EPA, working with the National PTA, has put together the following packet of educational materials, including colorful posters for classrooms, practical how-to information, and much more:

- National PTA/EPA "Get the Word Out...to Get the Lead Out" brochure (includes practical tips to use in your home, school and community)
- "Runs Better Unleaded" poster, brochure, tips cards/bookmarks (with camera ready art for reproduction purposes)
- Parent's Guide poster featuring information on how to obtain "Lead in Your Home: A Parent's



Reference Guide"

- Ten Tips to Protect Children From Pesticide and Lead Poisonings Around the Home
- Pest Control in the School Environment: Adopting Integrated Pest Management

Lead is recognized as one of the most significant environmental health threats to American children. It is estimated that almost 1,000,000 American children under the age of six have elevated blood lead levels. Lead can damage the brain and nervous system, and even a low level of lead exposure can cause learning disabilities, hearing loss, speech, language and behavior problems, and other serious health effects.

Get your childcare facility on board now to **"Get the Word Out...to Get the Lead Out!"**

Call 800-424-LEAD, press 0 for the operator and ask for the Teacher Packet.

Text Provided by EPA

Workshops being held in your area!

Learn how to get rid of pests at the same time you reduce pesticide exposure to children. Entomologists from Purdue University will provide information on how to use pesticides safely, they'll update you on pending legislation that may require all childcare facilities to notify parents when pesticides are used at the facility, and take a tour of a school to learn where pests hide and how to avoid them to begin with. This is also a great opportunity to ask about specific pests you may have problems with at work or home. All workshops are free and are aimed at schools and childcare facilities. You may also want to consider calling your licensed pesticide contractor to attend as well. Call Tami Johnson at 800-988-7901 for more information.

June 6	Indianapolis
June 8	Madison
June 12	Greencastle
June 13	Indianapolis
June 14	Indianapolis
June 15	Michigantown

More workshops to come. Stay tuned!

**See you
at the
NAEYC
Conference!**

Join us on Friday, March 9 at 8:00 for a mini session on pest management at the NAEYC conference. Come ask all those questions you have about those pests that are "bugging" you at work or home!

Have you renewed your 5-star Status?

Can you believe the 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program for Child Care Facilities is already heading into its third year? Many of you have been a member of this program since it began. Congratulations! If you check your plaque, you may see it expires this year. Now is the time to prepare to reapply for stars.

You've already completed most of the tasks when you applied two years ago. For example, if you already tested for radon and have written results, the only reason you should need to retest for radon

would be if you had a result close to the action limit. Also, if you've already tested for lead, it is highly unlikely you need to test again.

So where should you begin? Start by calling IDEM to set up a site visit. At that time, we can discuss what, if anything, needs to be completed.

If you have questions, would like assistance, or have a group of providers interested in hearing about the 5-Star Program, please call Karen at (800) 988-7901.

Pesticide Poisoning

Almost half of all households with children under the age of 5 have at least one pesticide stored in an unlocked cabinet, and less than 4 feet

13% of all pesticide poisonings occur in homes other than the child's home.

off the ground (i.e., within reach of children). 75% of households without children under the age of 5 also store one pesticide within reach of children.

This number is especially significant because 13% of all pesticide poisonings occur in homes other than the child's home.

Text provided by CPSC

What should you do?

1. Tell parents to alert others, especially grandparents, about the potential hazard pesticides may cause.

2. Have a policy at your facility prohibiting the use of pesticides by anyone except your licensed contractor. Do NOT allow teachers to bring in cans of pesticide from home. And do not, under any circumstances, allow pesticides to be stored in the classrooms. Childcare facilities should not need to keep pesticides on the premises at all. Your licensed contractor should not store pesticides at your facility.

3. If you need to apply pesticides, ask your contractor to use baits rather than spray. This reduces the risk of exposure to children.

4. Before applying pesticides (indoors and outdoors), remove children and their toys from the area and keep them away until it is dry or as recommended by the label.

Ugh! Paperwork!

No need to redo everything, just make sure it's up-to-date.

Take a look at the following documents and be sure they reflect any changes that may have happened over the past two years.



Self
Assessment



List of
Chemicals



Material
Safety
Data Sheets



Bloodborne
Exposure
Control
Plan

Spring
Cleaning
2001
To Do:
Get rid of all
pesticides

(continued from front page)

6. Yes No

Have you thrown out all out-of-date prescriptions? As medicines get older, the chemicals inside them can change. So what was once a good medicine may now be a dangerous poison. Flush all old drugs down the toilet. Rinse the container well, then discard it.

7. Yes No

Are all medicines in their original containers with the original labels? Prescription medicines may or may not list ingredients. The prescription number on the label will, however, allow rapid identification by the pharmacist of the ingredients should they not be listed. Without the original label and container, you can't be sure of what you're taking. After all, aspirin looks a lot like poisonous roach tablets.



8. Yes No

If your vitamins or vitamin/mineral supplements contain iron, are they in child-resistant packaging? Most people think of vitamins and minerals as foods and, therefore, nontoxic, but a few iron pills can kill a child.

9. Yes No

Have you made sure that no poisons are stored in drinking glasses or pop bottles?

When all your answers are "Yes," then continue this level of poison protection by making sure that, whenever you buy potentially harmful products, they have child-resistant closures and are kept out of sight and reach. Post the number of the Poison Control Center near your telephone.

2001 NATIONAL HEALTH OBSERVANCES

For a list of all the National Health Observances for 2001, check the web at: www.health.gov/nhic/pubs/nho.htm
Below are a few for this spring.

March

18-24 National Poison Prevention Week

April

2-8 National Public Health Week

7 World Health Day

22 Earth Day

22-28 National Infants Immunization Week

May

Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month

Clean Air Month

5-12 National SAFE KIDS Week

6-12 Food Allergy Awareness Week

22-29 Buckle up America! Week



Child Product Recalls

Want to know about child product recalls the same day they happen? Just subscribe to the CPSC's Email Subscription List. You can have agency press releases, which include product recalls and other safety information, and the agency's public calendar, automatically sent to you by e-mail the same day they are issued. To subscribe, visit their website at: www.cpsc.gov/about/subscribe.html